

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (original) A method of treating pulp i.e. fiber suspensions of the paper and wood processing industry, by which method

low consistency pulp is taken into a pre-thickener,

liquid is removed from the pulp in said pre-thickener essentially by means of the effect of the feeding pressure of the pre-thickener,

a layer of thickened pulp is allowed to be formed on the filter surface,

said layer of thickened pulp is wiped off the filter surface of said prethickener with a cleaning member, and

the thickened pulp and the filtrate are discharged from said apparatus, characterized in that

the layer of thickened pulp is pushed by said cleaning member along said filter surface to the discharge end of the apparatus in essentially axial direction,

at the same time the essentially non-thickened pulp is allowed to flow through the apparatus from the feeding end to the discharge end via the space between said cleaning member and the shaft of the apparatus, and

part of said essentially non-thickened pulp flow is guided to the filter surface portion being wiped by the cleaning member.

2. (previously presented) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that pulp is taken into said pre-thickener from a screen, the screening consistency of which is about 2 – 4 %.

3. (previously presented) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the pulp thickened by the prethickener is taken into a filter, the feeding consistency of which is 3 – 6 %.

4. (previously presented) A method according to claim 2, characterized in that between the screen and the filter the consistency of the pulp is raised by said pre-thickener by 1 – 4 %.

5. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the rotational speed of said pre-thickener cleaning member is such as to create for the thickened layer of pulp a speed less than 3 m/s towards the discharge end of the apparatus.

6. (original) A method according to claim 5, characterized in that said speed is between 0.2-1.0 m/s, preferably about 0.5 m/s.

7. (original) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the feeding speed of the screw and the flow speed of the non-thickened pulp are essentially the same at the discharge end of the apparatus.

8. (original) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the feeding pressure of the apparatus is created by means of a pump.

9. (original) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the thickening of the pulp is controlled with valves regulating the flow of incoming pulp, filtrate and/or thickened material.

10. (original) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the flow speed of the pulp in the apparatus is regulated by means of valves for the filtrate and/or the thickened material.

11. (original) A method according to claim 9, characterized in that the consistency of the thickened pulp is regulated to the desired value by changing the flow amount ratio of the thickened pulp and the filtrate.

12. (original) A method according to claim 9, characterized in that the consistency of the thickened pulp is regulated to the desired value by changing the flow amount ratio of the pulp to be thickened and the filtrate.

13. (original) A method according to claim 9, characterized in that said regulation is controlled on the basis of the input power or input torque of said cleaning member.

14. (previously presented) A method according to claim 9, characterized in that said regulation is controlled by maintaining a constant pressure difference over the filter surface.

15. (original) A method according to claim 9, characterized in that said regulation is controlled on the basis of an impulse from a previous or later process stage.

16. (original) A method according to claim 9, characterized in that said regulation is controlled by changing the rotational speed of the cleaning member.

17. (original) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that said filtrate is used for dilution in a previous process stage.

18. (original) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that said filtrate is used for dilution in the same process stage.

19. (original) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that fibers are separated from said filtrate by a fiber separating means prior to reusing the filtrate.

20-25. Canceled.